The Brethren's Evangelist.

M. R. HOLSINGER & CO., "LEAVING THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST, LET US GO ON UNTO PERFECTION." $2.00 per Annum in Advance.

VOL. VI. ASHLAND, O., WEDNESDAY, NOV. 26, 1884. NO. 47.

SIGNING THE FARM AWAY.

BY REV. W. R. COCHRANE.

Fine old farm for a hundred years
  Kept in the family name;
Cornfields rich with golden ears
  Oft as the harvest came;
Crowded barn and crowded bin,
And still the loads came rolling in—
Rolling in for a hundred years;
And the fourth in the family line appears!

Orchard covered the slope of the hill;
  Cider—forty barrels, they say—
Sure in season to come from the mill
  To be tasted round Thanksgiving Day!
And they drank as they worked and they drank as they ate,
Winter and summer, early and late;
Counting it a great mishap
To be found "without a barrel on tap!"

But, while the seasons crept along
  And habits into passions grew,
Their appetites became as strong
  As ever a drunkard knew!
And they labored less, and they squandered more,
Chiefly for rum at the village store,
Till called by the sheriff one bitter day,
To sign the homestead farm away!

The father shattered and scented with rum;
  The mother sick and pale and thin,
Under the weight of her sorrows dumb,
  In debt for the bed she was dying in;
Oh! I saw the wrecked household around her stand—
And the justice lifted her trembling hand,
Helping her, as in her pain she lay,
To sign the homestead farm away!

Ah! how she wept! And the flood of tears
  Swept down her temples bare!
And the father, already bowed with years,
  Bowed lower with despair!
Drink! drink! It had ripened into woe
For them and all they loved below;
And forced them, poor and old and gray,
To sign the homestead farm away!

Oh! many sad scenes have I met in life,
  And many a call to pray;
But the saddest of all was the drunkard's wife
  Signing the farm away!
Home once richest in all the town,
Home in the fatal cup poured down,
Worse than fire or flood's dismay—
Drunkard signing the farm away!

ORIGIN OF SABBATH SCHOOLS.

It was in the city of Pittsburg that the first general history of Sabbath schools was written. Some twenty-three years ago a clergyman, who had charge of a congregation here, was urged by a number of friends to give to the public materials relating to the origin and progress of Sabbath schools, which he had been collecting for many years. As no history of the kind had ever been attempted so far as known, in any country before, the sources of information were not only scant but barren; but enough was procured to make the matter interesting. The history was first published in the *United Brethren Quarterly Review*, and afterward, by request, in a separate form. It was reviewed very favorably by leading Sunday school workers and the press of this country. Without the knowledge of the author, as I understand, a copy was sent to a London magazine to be reviewed, and the editor ridiculed the idea of Sabbath schools having existed in Pennsylvania and other place in the United States, prior to their establishment in Gloucester, England, by Robert Raikes, 1781. The London editor pronounced the claim of priority of date in this country to be a piece of "Yankee cheek and impudence."

Since that time English authors have some what changed their opinion in regard to the claims put forth by the Pittsburg author of the

HISTORY OF SABBATH SCHOOLS.

In a new edition of a standard English work, published in 1883, which was first given to the public more than forty years ago, the editor admits the position taken in the Pittsburg history, and makes an almost verbatim quotation from it, as follows: "The first Sabbath school, was founded by Ludwig Hacker, between 1740 and 1747, at Ephrata, Lancaster county, Pa., among the German Seventh-day Baptists there. The schoolroom was used as a hospital after the battle of Brandywine, fought in 1777. This event occasioned the breaking up of the school, about five years before the first Sunday school was instituted in England by Robert Raikes, about 1782." Although it is a little aside from the intention of these papers, I may state here that in another part of the work just quoted from, the author says: "Cardinal Borromeo introduced Sunday instruction of children at Milan, about 1758; in the next century his example was followed in England by the Rev. Joseph Alleine; by Rev. Daniel Blair, at Brechin, about 1760; by the Rev. Theophilus Lindsay, at Catterick, Yorkshire, about 1763.

Thus it will be seen that the Pittsburg historian was rather moderate in the claims he put forth for the United States, but he showed by numerous references that Sunday schools existed in Scotland 221 years before Raikes' experiment at Gloucester.

PITTSBURG SABBATH SCHOOLS.

It is difficult to find out the exact date of the foundation of Sunday schools in Pittsburg. Until the dawn of the present century religious bodies, as such gave no patronage to Sunday schools in the United States. Prior to the year 1807 Sunday Schools were supported either by public subscription or at the private expense of those who founded them. Pittsburgers can boast that the Iron City was the first place in this country where the churches as organized bodies, gave support to the Sabbatical instruction of children. This statement is not based upon mere tradition. The author of the Teacher Taught says: "It was not until 1809, however, that churches, or public bodies began to institute or patronize Sabbath schools in this country. The first school on this plan was probably one organized August 22, 1809, in the city of Pittsburg, Pa., which met for the first time on the first Sabbath of September, in the jury room of the court house. It was regularly organized under an excellent constitution, and was attended by 240 adults. This school was formed without a knowledge of the mode of organization in Europe, and coincided in its principle features with schools now established.

A local historian does not speak in the most complimentary terms of the character and conduct of the pupils who composed the first Sabbath school that was organized in Pittsburg. It met, as already stated, in the jury room of the old courthouse, which stood in the Diamond, or "Market Square." The pupils formed, it is said, "a rude and ignorant crowd, of all ages up to manhood and womanhood, white and black, mingled together. Some of them were disfigured by bloody fights, then of almost daily occurrence. A well-grown boy was without a nose, it having been bitten off in a fierce battle." It is thought by some of the older inhabitants of the city that this is a much blacker picture of the condition and character of the children and adults of those days than the real state of the case warrants. That there was quite a number of poor people around Fort Pitt whose children, as well as the children of the soldiers, did not lead very exemplary lives, is altogether probable, but that those spoken of in the quotation given are a fair sample of the people who lived in Pittsburg in the beginning of the present century can scarcely be believed.

OPPOSITION TO SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

Sunday schools were not looked upon as auxiliary to the church in former times. Indeed, in some cases they were sternly opposed as interfering with catechetical and other instruction in the family on the Lord's day. This is exemplified in the case of a Mr. Wm. Lecky, a member and trustee of the first Presbyterian church, on Wood street, which was then called the "upper part" of the town. Mr. Lecky had a wagon shop just opposite the church, in and around which a large number of thoughtless and uncared-for children ran wild on the Lord's day. Touched with a feeling of compassion for the Sabbath breaking urchins, Mr. Lecky organized a juvenile Sabbath school in his shop in 1813. He engaged a gifted songstress to teach the children to sing hymns, but the aged members of the congregation did not look upon his course with favor, as they thonght it was rather a desecration of the Lord's day. The Presbyterian churches in those days did not use Watts' hymns very generally in the public service of the sanctuary, nor even in their private devotions. But whether the old people were opposed chiefly to the singing of hymns, or the imparting of instruction in this way, I cannot say. However, some of the older members of the first Presbyterian church preferred charges in the Session against Mr. Lecky for engaging in employment unbecoming the Lord's day. Dr. Herron, however, the pastor of the church, espoused the cause of Mr. Lecky and under his counsel, as its moderator, the Session inflicted no censure upon the pious wagon-maker. "Let him go on with his teaching," said Dr. Heron, "something will come of it."

PROSPERED GREATLY.

After this the Lecky school grew in favor with the congregation, and it was not long until the Session room of the church was set apart for its accommodation on the Lord's day. Sunday schools prospered greatly in those days; indeed, I should say amazingly, if the local historian referred to above gives a truthful representation of the character of the persons who composed the first organization in the jury-room. From the second annual report of the Philadelphia "Sabbath Day and Adult School Union," published in May, 1819, we find that the children who were receiving Sabbatical instruction in this city at that time numbered six hundred, at least. The number receiving instruction at present I cannot approximate, although a census of the Sunday schools was published, I believe, by the Young Men's Christian Association some years ago. The first Presbyterian Church, members of which gave opposition to Mr. Lecky, and even arraigned him before the Session for a violation of the Sabbath day by instructing wayward boys and girls to sing hymns on that day, has made great progress in this regard. Some three or four years ago the members built a chapel and Sunday school room apart from the church edifice at a cost of $25,000.

We shall get Home.

We shall get home; for oh, if we do not, what a lament there will be in heaven! Think of that. If the children do not come home, what mourning will be heard in the mansions above! Neither God nor good men could see the divine family broken and yet be happy. Every angel in heaven would feel a disappointment if one child of God was absent at the reading of the muster roll. Did they not rejoice over each one of us as a sinner repenting? Their sympathetic mirth was premature in our case if we perish by the way. But angels are not doomed to see their hopes frustrated, neither will the great Father find that he himself was glad too soon. Heaven would be a desolate place if at its banquet some David's seat was empty! We cannot endure to imagine some member of the sacred family missing, lost forever, cast into hell! It must not be for in the land of absolute perfection there is

No missing heir; no harp that lies unstrung,
No vacant place those hallowed halls among.

We shall get home for the great Father himself will never rest until we do; and he that bought us with his precious blood will never be satisfied till all his redeemed shall stand around him girt in their snow-white robes. If we had been on a pilgrimage with our families, and had reached home ourselves and then missed a dear child, what a stir there would be! I appeal to every father's heart; would you sleep with a child lost? Would you not tramp back every step of the road to seek the dear stray lamb? You would cry everywhere, "Saw you him whom my soul loveth?" Well can I imagine our good shepherd using the same words concerning any one of us if we did not get home, and asking everywhere, "Saw you him whom my soul loveth?" He would not rest until he had found his chosen, his heart's delight. Did he rest the first time until he brought us home on his shoulders rejoicing? Would he rest a second time until he had folded us in glory? No, he can never have full joy in his heart until all his ransomed are in the place where the many be. "We shall get home."

Dear friends we shall get home, I am sure we shall; and what a joy it will be! Think of the bliss of seeing our Father, our home, our Saviour, and all those who are dear to us for Jesus' sake. A venerable sister who saw me very busy the other day remarked that we should have plenty of time to talk to each other in eternity. I do not quite see how there can be time when time shall be no more, but no doubt there will be a space and opportunity for the fullest communion with each other, and for much fellowship of united delight in the adorable person of our blessed Lord. I anticipate much felicity from fellowship with saints above, since I have had so much pleasure in the society of imperfect saints here below. Many have gone home from us of late, and we are all getting older; but let us not regret the fact, since the home above is being filled, and a perfect society is being formed which will last forever.—*Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.*

Crowning and Scalping Mt. Diablo.

It is fifteen minutes past three o'clock, p. m., San Francisco time, Nov. 1st, 1884, and I am sitting on a bleak ragged rock, forming the summit of next to the highest peak of Mount Diablo, fanned by a strong and cool breeze from the Pacific ocean. I do not often covet being seen, but I imagine if some of my dear friends could see me now, as I am crowning the mount, with straps over my shoulders, powder and shot flasks hanging by my sides, a double-barrelled shot gun leaning against the rocks at my feet, my tablet on my knee, and last, but not least important, my faithful pencil in my hand, they would be amused, at least, if not pleased with the sight. This mount affords the best view in this part of the State, commanding the Sierras, on the east, from Lassen's Butte on the north, to the High Sierras on the south, the great San Joaquin and Sacramento Valleys, long stretches of the Coast range of which this forms a part, and westward still on the broad Pacific. Here you survey at once an area of 32,000 square miles, greatly diversified with ocean, rivers, mountains, valleys, cities, valleys, ranches, gardens, orchards, vineyards and deserts. At this season of the year there is too much smoke for a clear view, and consequently I do not enjoy the prospect as fully as I would on a May morn. If spared till then, I shall endeavor to ascend the mount again, when I may have more to say about it. For the present I will only add that I have pecked off the highest point of the peak to preserve for the inspection of such readers of the EVANGELIST as may visit us.

I commenced a meeting at the Liberty school-house (Marsh Creek,) on the 26th ult. The attendance and interest, although not as good as desired, are, perhaps, as favorable as could reasonably be expected. To-night the Good Templars hold their anniversary at this place, and consequently we shall have no services to-night. This I regret very much, as a change of this kind must necessarily interfere with the interest and success of our meeting.

It is now Nov. 14th, and I will try to complete this correspondence. I closed my meeting at Marsh Creek on the evening of the 2nd inst., with a full house and a good interest. I had intended to continue longer, but was obliged to stop so as to get home to our council meeting on the 5th. This was a special council called on account of the visit of Elders E. Eby and D. Barklow, who were sent as a committee by the last German Baptist annual meeting. On the 3rd they had a council in the Chapparral congregation, which I could not attend; but brother J. P. Wolfe was there, as well as at our own council, and consequently he will furnish a report for the EVANGELIST. I will only state in this connection that the elders seemed to be at a loss to know what to do, and consequently did but little. They preached some good gospel sermons, and I am of the opinion that their visit resulted in good for the Brethren. From some cause, best understood by themselves, they did not use their full power as a committee from annual meeting, and, no doubt the work will be finished at next annual meeting.

On the evening of the 6th your correspondent delivered a lecture at the Union church, Lathrop, which was very well patronized. Subject, "Very Low Down." The proceeds (about $25.00) were applied to a little indebtedness on the property. We thank our brethren, sisters, and fellow-citizens for their liberality, and hope they feel repaid, at least, in knowing that they did something for a good cause. There is a happiness in right-doing that can be realized only in doing the right. Every duty has its own pleasure, which is lost if the duty is neglected.

On the 8th and 9th I visited the Chapparal church, and had three pleasant meetings. The visit of the committee to this place seems to have excited an increased desire for the Gospel-alone doctrine.

The EVANGELIST, No. 42, is a rich mine of good news and profound truth. May all old subscribers be retained and many new ones be added for 1885.

J. W. BEER.

Lathrop, Cal. Nov. 14, 1884.

In reprehension we should always beware of carrying our teeth in our tongues and of biting while we are speaking.